

**QLDC Council
8 October 2020**

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take 6

Department: Finance, Legal & Regulatory

Title | Taitara Dog Control Policy and Practices Report 2019 - 2020

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

The purpose of this report is to inform Council on the dog control policy and practices undertaken in the 2019/2020 financial year, in accordance with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Adopt** the Dog Control Policy and Practices report 2019/2020, in accordance with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996;
3. **Approve** the publication of the Dog Control Policy and Practices report 2019/2020; and
4. **Direct** Council staff to forward a copy of the Dog Control Policy and Practices report 2019/2020 to the Secretary for Local Government.

Prepared by:



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18/08/2020

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CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 1 The Dog Control Act 1996 (“Act”) requires Council to report on the administration of its dog control practices and dog control policy each financial year.
- 2 The report must include details regarding:
 - The number of registered dogs, probationary owners and disqualified owners in the district;
 - The number of dogs classified menacing or dangerous as a result of their actions, and the number of dogs classified as menacing by the type or breed; and
 - Infringement notices issued, the type and number of complaints received and prosecutions taken.
- 3 The Act also requires that the report of these activities must be publicly notified in one or more daily newspapers circulating in the District, or one or more newspapers that have at least an equivalent circulation in the District to that of daily newspaper.
- 4 A copy of the report (Attachment A) must also be forwarded to the Secretary for the Local Government within one month of adopting the report.
- 5 The report details the dog control activities undertaken by Queenstown Lakes District Council in the 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020 financial year.

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

- 6 Council has identified dog control as a primary area of focus within its Enforcement Strategy and Enforcement Action Plan. The specific objective of the Action Plan is to “ensure a safe environment from roaming and aggressive dogs for our community”.

The key areas and figures within the report are:

- a) Additional goals have been achieved (over and above regular patrol and response), enabling us to work closely with the public, as described below:
 - Working with primary schools and local children’s groups to help educate children around approaching dogs and local bylaws on dog control;
 - Media education distributed to the public around control of dogs and roaming dogs;
 - Working alongside local events to ensure control of dogs and education is provided;
 - Additional dog waste bag dispensers placed in high priority locations (i.e. Matakauri Park);

- Additional regular weekend patrols targeting popular walking trails: Queenstown Hill and Matakauri Park;
 - Targeted patrol in high volume public areas;
 - Hosting the first Queenstown Dog walk; and
 - Providing free dog training classes in Queenstown and Wānaka
- b) **Registered Dogs** There was a 7.05% increase in the number of registered dogs from 5033 in 2018-19 to 5388 in 2019-20. Despite this growth, the number of complaints are down from 1161 in 2018-19 to 1050 in 2019-20.
- c) **Classification of Dogs** There were four dangerous dogs registered during this year, which remains unchanged from the previous period. One dog was newly classified as dangerous and one dog was notified as deceased, so the number has remained the same as for the 2018/19 registration period. One dog was newly classified as Menacing by Behaviour, as a result of a minor attack on a human. No new Menacing dogs were transferred into the District in 2019/20.
- d) **Probationary and Disqualified owners** There is one disqualified owner in the District who has a Disqualified status until October 2021. In previous years this owner has been misreported as Probationary, and therefore the report has been changed to reflect this. There are no new Probationary or Disqualified dog owners in the District.
- e) **Attacks** The number of attacks has remained relatively similar, with a small reduction from 64 reported attacks in 2018/19 to 62 reported attacks in 2019/20. There has been a 32.5% increase in attacks on animals, from 40 reported attacks in 2018-19 to 53 reported attacks in 2019-20. However, attacks on humans have decreased by 60%, from 20 in 2018-19 to 8 in 2018/2019. One of these minor attacks on humans resulted in a menacing classification.
- f) **Roaming Dogs** Despite a growth of 7.05% of dogs registered in the District, the number of reports received from the community of roaming dogs has stayed relatively similar, with a small increase from 498 in 2018/19 to 506 in 2019/20.

Roaming dogs is the area where we receive the most Request For Service (RFS) from the community and is where we spend the largest proportion of time responding, educating and enforcing, therefore it is pleasing to see the number of RFS received has only marginally increased, and proportionally decreased in consideration of the number of dogs registered in the District.

- f) **Impounded Dogs** The Council has identified that the number of impounds recorded in previous years was incorrectly calculated (We do not consider that the errors were significant as the corrected figures are a reduced amount and therefore a positive change in numbers). The Council has now re-run the impounding statistics for the past 5 years, to clarify the recording of what has taken place in this space.

In 2019/20 there were 68 dogs impounded. This correlates to 1.26% of dogs registered in the District. The number is slightly lower than expected, given the rise in the number of dogs registered in the year and when compared to data in previous years. Lockdown may have contributed to the slightly lower number of impounds, as Council was more focused on reuniting dogs with their owners than impounding them over that time.

To clarify the records from previous years, the recalculated number of impounds from previous years is set out below:

2018/19 Number of impounds: 88	(Recorded as 144 in previous years)
2017/18 Number of impounds: 51	(Recorded as 110 in previous years)
2016/17 Number of impounds: 62	(Recorded as 92 in previous years)
2015/16 Number of impounds: 43	(Recorded as 99 in previous years)

There has been no change to the impound fees in the last financial year, being:

First impound \$125

Second impound \$200 + \$200 infringement

Third impound \$300 + \$200 infringement

- g) **Barking Complaints** The number of complaints for barking dogs received has stayed relatively the same, from 159 in 2018/19 to 164 2019/20. Council continues to provide the free use of anti-bark devices to dog owners. This year the Animal Control Officers invested in voice recorded bark collars to meet current welfare standards and also held free dog training classes in both Queenstown and Wānaka with a qualified dog behaviourist.
- h) **Infringements** There has been an increase in the number of infringements issued from 38 in 2018/19 to 53 in 2019/20. 43 of those infringements were issued to owners for failure to register their dog at the start of the registration year, which is an increase from 18 issued in the previous year.

Despite receiving 164 barking dog complaints, only three infringements were issued for failing to comply with a barking dog abatement notice.

- i) **Dog Control Bylaw** There was a review of the QLDC Dog Control Bylaw and Policy in the last year. The process was carried out successfully and the key changes in the bylaw that were consulted on and adopted were:
- a) Dogs now prohibited on Queenstown Hill and the Queenstown Hill Walkway;
 - b) An on-leash requirement for Matakauri Park, Gorge Road; and
 - c) Dogs now permitted on Buckingham Street, Arrowtown with an on leash requirement. This being a change from being Prohibited.

7 **Option 1** Adopt the Dog Control Policies and Practices Report 2019/2020

Advantages:

- 8 Legislative compliance. This enables Council to comply with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996.

Disadvantages:

- 9 Public notification. There is a small cost to publicly notify this report.

10 **Option 2** Reject the Dog Control Policies and Practices Report 2019/2020

Advantages:

- 11 No cost to publicly notify this report.

Disadvantages:

- 12 Council will fail to comply with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996.

- 13 This report recommends **Option 1** for addressing the matter because it is a statutory requirement for Council to adopt and publicly notify its annual dog control policy and practices report.

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 14 This matter is of low significance, as determined by reference to the Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy because there is a low impact on our environment and culture from the decision of the report.
- 15 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are Dog owners, Residents/Ratepayers, Visitors and other councils.
- 16 The Council will place an advertisement in the local newspaper to advise the public of this report being available on the QLDC Website.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

- 17 The Council will place an advertisement in the local newspaper to advise the public of this report being available on the QLDC website.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

- 18 This matter relates to the Regulatory/Legal/Compliance risk category. It is associated with OR004 within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a moderate inherent risk rating.

19 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing us to retain the risk at its current level. This shall be achieved by putting measures in place which directly impact the risk, through Council's response to urgent Requests for Service within two hours across the District, conducting routine dog control patrols, enforcing Council's Dog Policy and education programmes for schools around dogs and safety.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

20 The costs associated with publicly notifying the adoption of the Dog Control Policy and Practices will be met from current budgets.

COUNCIL EFFECTS AND VIEWS | NGĀ WHAKAAWEAWE ME NGĀ TIROHANGA A TE KAUNIHERA

21 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- Dog Control Policy 2020 – This policy provides the principal rules regarding dog control throughout the District;
- Significance and Engagement Policy – The decision is not significant, as the report is to be noted and does not detail further;
- Enforcement Strategy and Prosecution Policy – This policy outlines Council's enforcement approach and options available.
- Reference alignment with and consideration of the principles of the Vision Beyond 2050: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/your-council/our-vision-mission>
- A catalogue of policies, strategies and bylaws is available here or consult with the Corporate policy team: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/your-council/council-documents/policies>
- The QLDC Disability Policy should be considered in most if not all cases. You can read a copy of the policy here: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/your-council/council-documents/policies>

22 The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policy/policies.

23 This matter is included in the Ten Year Plan/Annual Plan

- Volume 1 – Regulatory functions and services

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS AND STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES | KA TURE WHAIWHAKAARO, ME KĀ TAKOHAKA WAETURE

24 Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to adopt a dog control policy and practices report annually. A copy of the report must be sent to the Secretary for Local Government, and must be publicly notified following its adoption.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002 PURPOSE PROVISIONS | TE WHAKATURETURE 2002 O TE KĀWANATAKA Ā-KĀIKA

25 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by awareness of the educational and enforcement matters identified;
- Can be implemented through current funding under the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRIHANGA

A	Dog Control Policy and Practices Report 2019/2020
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